

THE PIAGGIO BUILT GS150



VS1	(1955)	VS1T 001001 - 0013300	12300
VS2	(1956)	VS2T 0013301 - 0023310	10010
VS3	(1957)	VS3T 0023311 - 0035310	12000
VS4	(1958)	VS4T 0035311 - 0047350	12040
VS5	(1959)	VS5T 0047351 - 00127350	80000

TOTAL 126350

From a distance of more than forty five years, it is difficult to fully appreciate the impact the GS must have had when it was first seen in public at the Milan show towards the end of 1954. It was scooters equivalent of the launch of the "E" Type Jaguar at Geneva in 1961. A landmark in scooter history, 60 mph performance was combined with beautifully streamlined styling that hardly seems dated today. There were other scooters around with this kind of performance, mostly German in origin. Whilst well engineered, they were heavy and had hopeless body styling. There was now a definite market for a fast touring scooter that could be ridden to- and compete in-the hundreds of sporting events that took place throughout Europe every summer. The GS had no serious competitor in this market until the introduction of the Lambretta TV series 2 in 1959. If you add style to the equation then there was no serious competitor, ever.

Apart from being 150 cc, the extra power was accounted for by enlarged porting and carburation, which allowed the engine to run to 7500 rpm - 50% more than the 125 could manage. 7500 rpm is nothing special by today's standards, but it certainly was at the time. The engine featured a stronger crankshaft and larger bearings to cope with the additional stresses. For the first time a fourth gear was fitted to a Vespa, and there was a larger petrol tank.

The headlight was moved upwards so that it could turn with the steering, and encased in a curvaceous cast alloy headset. The headlight was of a larger diameter than the one on the 125, and the speedo was new.

The sidepanels were now much larger, and a dual seat fitted as standard - Finally -and most obviously - the wheel size was increased to 10 inches.

The GS150 was produced in the era preceeding that of spiralling inflation. Consequently, most of the changes can be considered to be genuine improvements and not, as sometimes happened in later years, excuses for cost cutting. Sometimes, as with the case of the new panel clip introduced for the VS4, it was possible to produce something that was easier to use, looked better and was cheaper to make. A case of good design indeed. Always finished in silver, the GS was continually developed as follows.

VS1

The original version of the GS with the front brake and clutch cables running outside the headset. Models for the home market were not fitted with a brake light, but for Britain and elsewhere there was a special rear light incorporating one. On the Vsi only, models sold in this country had a horn casting badge that said "Douglas" rather than "Piaggio".

VS2

All the control cables were now located inside the headset, and the steering column pressing in front of the rider was altered to accommodate this change. Starting was now via the battery instead of directly off the flywheel. The design of the rectifier was changed, and the horn was now chromed. A peak was now fitted to the headlight rim, and legshield trim was fitted as standard. There had been complaints about the comfort of the seat, so a new one with deeper springs was designed. Unfortunately, this necessitated a flush-fitting fuel tank with less capacity than the VS1 type.

VS3

The design of the rectifier was changed again; there were no other alterations. In fact the Vespa Technica book doesn't even list a rectifier change. It's a bit of a mystery as to why Piaggio bothered to designate a separate VS3 model in the first place.

VS4

There were yet more electrical changes, and a new type of rear light was fitted. The latter incorporated a brake light and was fitted on home market as well as export GSs. The brake shoes now pivoted on separate pins and the brake pedal was no longer chromed. The design of the retaining clip for the engine side panel was changed.

VS5

The headset was altered to incorporate a new oval shaped speedo. The brake drums were now exposed, the wheelrims being attached to them by lugs. The mudguard crest was made smaller, and the headlight rim now had an integral peak. At some point the larger chromed rear light more usually associated with the subsequent GS160 was fitted, and, at the same time, the pilot light was altered and the red dot in the headset deleted.